

III. CONTINUUM OF CARE

For over seventeen years, the City of Long Beach has been committed to shaping a comprehensive and coordinated system of care to respond to the diverse needs of homeless and at-risk individuals and families. In an on-going collaborative effort with local agencies, city leaders, and community groups and with the support of public and private resources, the City continues to expand services to homeless populations and works to provide for a seamless delivery system that addresses all the fundamental needs of the homeless population. Through the City's Consolidated Planning process and the Continuum of Care delivery system, the City and social service providers strive to create a balance of emergency, transitional, and permanent housing and supportive services to assist homeless families and individuals, empowering them to make the critical transition from the streets to self-sufficiency and permanent independent housing.

The Long Beach Continuum of Care delivery system is comprised of several components:

- Homeless prevention
- Outreach and assessment to the hard to reach homeless, service resistant and the newly homeless who may be unaware of the available services
- Emergency shelter for individuals and families until either transitional housing, sober living, residential substance abuse treatment or other specialized housing can be arranged
- Transitional housing with supportive services
- Permanent and permanent supportive housing

A wide array of supportive services are provided through each step of the Continuum of Care delivery system to help all sub-populations of homeless individuals and families receive the assistance they need.



Neighborhood Partnership Project (Signal Box Painting – East Village)

Goals/Action Steps –

As a result of the Continuum of Care planning process, the City has defined its vision as follows: **Every resident of Long Beach will be able to access adequate housing, food, and medical services.** Reaching this goal remains the focus of the Continuum of Care. Throughout the year, various groups involved in the Continuum of Care planning process assess areas of need and set priority areas and goals. Areas of concentration during 2002 – 2003 include: (1) Completing a street and service-based enumeration of homeless residents, and an assessment of service needs and issues; (2) Working to develop a 10-year strategic plan to address homelessness in Long Beach, with a particular emphasis on ending chronic homelessness; (3) Continuing to strengthen outreach to homeless residents; (4) Developing affordable permanent housing options; (5) Increasing the number of transitional housing beds; (6) Continuing to focus on the establishment of a year-round high tolerance 24 hour emergency shelter for the homeless; (7) Exploring the establishment of a low demand, high tolerance drop-in center; (8) Continuing to build relationships with neighborhood and business associations, and increasing awareness regarding homelessness through these linkages; (9) Supporting the Multi-Service Center for the Homeless; and (10) Working in conjunction with the City's Housing Services Bureau to develop a Housing Trust Fund to augment housing resources and thereby increase the number of affordable housing units in Long Beach.

A few examples of specific Continuum of Care for Homeless Assistance program goals and action steps completed or to be taken include:

- The City in consultation with the Institute for Urban Research and Development conducted a point-in-time enumeration, bed count inventory, and an in-depth assessment of homeless persons residing in Long Beach. The homeless point-in-time enumeration on March 12, 2003 revealed that the City had 5,845 homeless persons on the streets and in shelters, with 2,967 single adults and 2,878 persons in homeless families with children.
- Continue dialoguing with the Los Angeles Services Authority (LAHSA) to analyze the feasibility of developing a high tolerance emergency shelter in Long Beach, and research funding options including local, state and federal resources.
- Homeless Services Advisory Committee will kick off the development of a 10-year strategic planning process to address homelessness in Long Beach.
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) pilot implementation phase will begin in March 2004.

Prevention Programs

Through several agencies, the Long Beach Continuum of Care provides prevention services, such as rental assistance and eviction prevention, designed to assist persons from becoming homeless. In fiscal year 2002-2003, Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) assisted **36 families** who were in danger of losing their homes with rental assistance and eviction prevention funds. These funds were provided in conjunction with case management and follow-up care that prevented them from becoming homeless. In addition, Beyond Shelter provides rental assistance subsidies to families in permanent housing to prevent eviction and stabilizes the family through intensive case management. Several local agencies in a countywide consortium funded through Los Angeles County's Emergency Food and Shelter Program and operated by Beyond Shelter, provide assistance with utilities, rental assistance and case management. New Image Emergency Shelter, in addition to several other local social service agencies, provides rental assistance subsidies through Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS funds received from Los Angeles County, to assist persons living with HIV/AIDS from becoming homeless. Multi-Service Center collaborative agencies incorporate a prevention component into their services by holding special classes for low and very low income families and individuals to assist with budgeting, information access, case management, health programs, and access to other mainstream resources.

Multi-Service Center

The Multi-Service Center (MSC) is a unique facility which co-locates 14 social service agencies in order to provide integrated, comprehensive services for homeless individuals and families in one location. These services include: showers and laundry facilities, mail and message services, mental health outreach, homeless prevention assistance, case management, crisis counseling, licensed child care, life skills training, employment assistance, housing placement, rental assistance, advocacy services, health screenings, and information and referrals to other services.

Since the opening in March of 1999, the MSC has functioned as a main entry point into the City of Long Beach's Continuum of Care system. MSC services expanded in 2000 with the completion of Building II, which is adjacent to the original facility. Utilization of the MSC has consistently grown over time. From October 2002 to the end of September 2003, the MSC provided services to **20,416 duplicated client contacts, which includes 2,023 female heads of household.**

Outreach and Assessment

Several methods are utilized in Long Beach to refer chronically homeless individuals, households experiencing crisis homelessness, and those at risk of becoming homeless, to social service agencies. These mechanisms include street outreach, distribution of pocket resource guides the availability of toll-free hotline numbers and the City's Homeless Services Coordinator to provide referrals to those in need.

Street outreach is usually the first point of contact for most homeless persons. The goal of outreach is to engage the service resistant and chronically mentally ill homeless individual living on the street. Several agencies conduct street outreach in Long Beach, including the City of Long Beach Multi-Service Center, the Mental Health Association, New Image Emergency Shelter, Travelers Aid Society, Father Flanagan's Girls and Boys Town, Veteran's Affairs, United States Veteran's Initiative, the Downtown Long Beach Association, and the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Nurses and Mobile Health Clinics. Various agencies focus on special populations such as youth, chronically mentally ill, dually diagnosed homeless, and women affected by domestic violence. Many of the agencies in the City work together to provide citywide coverage.

The "Pocket Guide Resource Directory" is a highly utilized tool that contains information about human services in the Long Beach area. These guides are printed and distributed free of charge by the City's Department of Health and Human Services to local agencies, businesses, churches, city council offices, parks, libraries, and police officers. Between October 2002 to September 2003, 10,500 pocket guides were printed and distributed to homeless persons and those at-risk of homelessness in the community last year, and were responsible for many homeless individuals and families connecting with existing services. *Infoline*, a toll-free number that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, provides housing referrals to Long Beach residents, and the City's Homeless Services Coordinator gives referrals and conducts presentations in the community on homeless services and issues.

Housing Placement Services

Several local agencies utilize Supportive Housing Program (SHP) funding and the City's Social Services Grant funds to provide housing placement assistance. Beyond Shelter, Mental Health Association, Travelers Aid Society and New Image Emergency Shelter housing placement coordinators provide individuals and families with listings of housing units that are safe, clean, affordable, and handicapped accessible. The agencies also assist with move-in funds for utilities, furnishings, and first/last month rent. The housing placement coordinators develop rapport with apartment associations and local landlords to bridge the gap between property owners and persons trying to reenter the permanent housing market. Beyond Shelter assisted **65 families** in becoming permanently housed within one month of enrollment into their program. **Thirty families** were successfully placed within the year and **20 families** have remained in permanent housing for 6 months.

Emergency Shelter (90 day shelter)

Several agencies in Long Beach provide temporary shelter for homeless families and individuals, and for specific sub-populations of the homeless with an average length of stay of less than 90 days. In fiscal year 2002-2003, Emergency Shelter Grant funds supported six agencies that provide emergency shelter including Father Flanagan's Girls and Boys Town, Catholic Charities, Southern California Alcohol and Drug Program, 1736 Family Crisis Shelter, Travelers Aid Society, and WomenShelter of Long Beach. In addition to these organizations, several other agencies provide temporary shelter in the City including Los Angeles County's Winter Shelter Program and the Long Beach Rescue Mission. Efforts are continuing to increase the availability of emergency shelter beds in the City.

Transitional Housing: Villages at Cabrillo

Through the 1994 Naval Reuse Process, the Los Angeles Veterans Initiative was given 26 acres to develop a planned community, the Villages at Cabrillo, to address the needs of homeless individuals and families. In March 2000, the first phase of the Villages at Cabrillo opened and began serving clients. The Villages at Cabrillo is made up of a collaboration of organizations dedicated to providing a wide range of services to break the cycle of homelessness. In fiscal year 2002-2003, three agencies at the Villages at Cabrillo (1736 Family Crisis Center, Salvation Army, and United States Veteran's Initiative) were funded through the Supportive Housing Program (SHP) to provide transitional housing for up to 24 months. These agencies operated **170 transitional housing beds** and housed **353 individuals** and **68 families (85 adults, 161 children)**. The transitional housing addresses the needs of several homeless sub-populations including unaccompanied youth, veterans, single women and men, substance abusers, families, and dually diagnosed. Supportive services available to residents include case management, life skills training, educational training, residential support, licensed childcare and employment training and assistance.

Permanent Housing

In fiscal year 2002-2003, the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the City's Housing Authority and four MSC social service agencies, developed a Permanent Housing Section 8 Program for Homeless Families. Under this pilot program, the Housing Authority has designated 20 Section 8 vouchers to be earmarked specifically for homeless families who will receive in-home case management and supportive services from the participating MSC agencies.

Section III – Continuum Of Care

In addition to this program, the City administers nearly 4,000 Section 8 certificates and almost 1,300 Section 8 vouchers, which are often utilized by homeless residents and those at-risk of becoming homeless. In addition, the City has 3,000 affordable and/or subsidized housing units constructed through 811, 813, 221 (D)(3,4) and 236 programs, as well as bond financed units that are available to low and very low income individuals and families. Case managers at the MSC print out listings of affordable permanent housing in the City and distribute them to their clients.

Several agencies administer Shelter Plus Care Program funding. Under this program, Mental Health Association provides **36 units** of permanent housing to persons who are disabled. The United States Veteran's Initiative provides **32 units** of permanent housing to individuals who are disabled.

Funding

The City expended \$329,000 of Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds and \$140,000 of Community Development Block Grant funds on activities directly serving the City's homeless population. The distribution of ESG funds is listed in the CAPER Financial section of this report. **Table III-A** provides information on agencies funded under ESG.

Mobile Recreation Program



Meet the City Manager – Neighborhood Resource Center



TABLE III – A

Emergency Shelter Grant Funded Agencies

Agency Name
Address

1. 1736 Family Crisis Center
Long Beach Address Confidential For Client Safety
2. Father Flanagan's Girls and Boys Town
3605 Long Beach Boulevard, Suite 235
3. Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc.
123 East 14th Street/2001 River Avenue
4. Southern California Alcohol and Drug Programs, Inc.
1755 Freeman
5. Travelers Aid Society of Long Beach/Department of Health and Human Services
1301 West 12th Street
6. WomenShelter of Long Beach
Long Beach Address Confidential For Client Safety

TABLE III- B
EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT PROGRAM MATCH
FISCAL YEAR 2002-2003

Agency	Allocation	Match
1736 Family Crisis Center	150,000	150,000
Catholic Charities	40,000	40,000
Father Flanagan's Boys Town	19,000	19,000
So Cal Alcohol & Drug Programs	39,000	39,000
WomenShelter	28,500	28,500
DHHS Admin	16,500	16,500
DHHS Prevention	36,000	36,000
TOTALS	\$329,000	\$329,000

Historically, the City of Long Beach has provided the dollar-for-dollar match requirement for federal funds administered under the Emergency Shelter Grant Program. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2002-2003, the City shifted the responsibility of meeting match requirements back to the grant recipients requiring them to provide 100% match of fund allocations through cash or in-kind contributions. Agencies are monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance with match obligations.